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ABSTRACT

These proceedings from a conference sponsored by the New England Consortium for the Right to Read discuss the role of administrators in Right to Read programs. Included are discussions of the New England Consortium effort, the role of the administrator in implementing and organizing the reading program, and reports from section meetings on problems and action alternatives in organizing and operationalizing the Right to Read programs. A list of conference participants is also included. (AA)

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THE NEW ENGLAND CONSORTIUM FOR THE RIGHT TO READ

ESTABLISHING THE ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE IN RIGHT TO READ

Conference Proceedings

CS 003 042

ESTABLISHING THE ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE IN RIGHT TO READ
Conference Proceedings

This conference was held
September 17-18, 1975
in Boxborough, Massachusetts

February 1976

Consortium Leadership

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Hon. H. Sawin Millett, Maine
Hon. Gregory R. Anrig, Massachusetts
Hon. Newell J. Paire, New Hampshire
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Contract Arrangements

The Curriculum Research and Development Center, Department of Education, University of Rhode Island holds the contract for this project. Fiscal management is under the direction of Dr. Theodore M. Kellogg. Dr. Marion L. McGuire is the coordinator of operations.

Acknowledgements

The Consortium Committee members wish to express sincere appreciation to the many administrators who took time from their busy September schedules to participate in discussions concerning their role in Right to Read. Your presence was evidence that reading is a priority in your school system. We look forward to an interesting year as we cooperatively pursue Right to Read goals.

Introduction

Right to Read is a massive effort to eradicate illiteracy. It involves both a campaign to enlist widespread support for the plan to achieve literacy and funded programs such as the state-grant program through which the Consortium was established. Since the level of funding is low — often referred to as "seed money" — a way had to be found to accomplish Right to Read goals with a minimal dependence upon new materials and resources. The decision was made to emphasize *process* rather than programs and materials. The Right to Read process allows school districts to develop their own tailor-made programs to meet their individual needs. To implement the process, however, requires the cooperation of many people.

Other funded programs are strikingly different from the process orientation of the Right to Read effort. Usually, monies are provided to allow for the acquisition of additional staff members, new program materials and other resources and/or services. These additions are often added to the regular program for the life of the grant and then either dropped or carried as an appendage by the regular school budget. These purchased solutions help only those students who are enrolled in the special program but do little, generally speaking, of a developmental nature to prevent future need for the added program. Customarily, once the added program is established there is a continued need for it. Whatever the problem in the regular program that gave rise to it originally, it continues to produce students who need this special assistance.

Right to Read differs in that an attempt is made to plan a reading program broad and comprehensive enough to meet most students' needs without a multiplicity of added programs and materials. The Right to Read process focuses on correcting the *existing program* rather than the *student*. The emphasis is on building "failure-proof" programs so that all students will succeed. The Criteria of Excellence describe the program that will ultimately be achieved through successful use of the Right to Read process.

The Right to Read process is efficient because it depends upon retraining existing staff and reallocating existing resources. When funding ceases, school districts are left with an upgraded program, but no appendages to lose or add to the school budget.

However, there are problems associated with instituting a process-oriented program. For one, it is a new type of solution. We are oriented toward money solutions (even though money hasn't produced one yet). It is sometimes difficult to sell the idea that something good can come cheaply. In these days of inflation, we don't expect to find inexpensive solutions.

Once past the first hurdle with the understanding that Right to Read is not a money program, there is the problem of creating a general awareness of what the Right to Read process entails and the extent of personal involvement necessary to make it work. It calls for team effort and commitment. It requires changes in people, the roles they play, their level of involvement. To bring about these changes, leadership and change agent skills are necessary on the part of Right to Read directors and principals and the unwavering commitment and support of the school committee, superintendent, central office staff and community at large.

Administrators play key roles in the Right to Read effort. To provide them with the opportunity to explore the problems in establishing these roles with their peers and to discuss some possible alternative steps to solve these problems, the Consortium brought administrators from new Right to Read sites together for this conference.

M. L. M.

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THE NEW ENGLAND CONSORTIUM EFFORT

—Marion L. McGuire

Welcome to our Right to Read Conference for Administrators. The theme of this conference is: The Role of Administration in the Right to Read Effort. In attendance are superintendents, central office staff, principals and LEA directors from the new Right to Read sites in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. It is certainly encouraging to see so many of you willing to spend time this early in the school year to travel from near and far to discuss the problems and possible alternative actions in establishing administrative roles as you begin your association with and commitment to Right to Read.

In introducing you today to the New England Consortium Effort, I would like to tell you briefly about what the Consortium is, how it came about, what our goals are and then about the strategy we have developed for implementing Right to Read in a school system.

What is the Consortium? The Consortium is a regional group joined together to eliminate illiteracy in our five-state area. It is composed of the Consortium Committee and the member school systems. The Consortium Committee is made up of two members from each state, the State Right to Read director and a Commissioners' Committee member.

School system membership continues to grow. During the first two years, 98 school systems joined the Consortium effort. This year we have more than doubled that number. We now have over 200 school systems from the five-state area identified as Right to Read school systems and members of the Consortium.

How did the Consortium come about? The Consortium originated when the six New England Commissioners of Education decided to join together and appoint a committee, one member from each state, to write a proposal for possible funding. The Commissioners chose to form a Consortium because the states had many common needs as revealed by the New England Educational Assessment Project in the late 1960's. They felt that a joint project would result in a more efficient and effective use of both human and material resources in meeting those needs.

The Commissioners' Committee met many times. We considered the needs assessment findings reported by the New England Educational Assessment Project in Reading, set priorities that had meaning for all of the New England states and devised a plan that would meet our priority needs. The resultant proposal was funded as of June 30, 1973. Since Vermont had been separately funded in the interim, the five remaining states formed the Consortium.

What are the Consortium goals? The long-range Consortium goal is to assist school systems in meeting the national goal, i.e., by 1980, 99 percent of those 16 years of age and younger and 90 percent of those over 16 will read to the extent of their capabilities and consistent with their life goals. To facilitate the achievement of that goal, we have established twenty-six Criteria of Excellence, explained in the booklet *Focus on Excellence* which you will find in your conference folder. These criteria are grouped under five goal areas: School and Community Climate, Organization and Management of the Reading Program, Staffing the Reading Program, Selection and Use of Materials and Fostering Reading Interests. The criteria under these five goal areas are the hallmarks of a "failure proof" reading program. We ask each member school system to work toward them. However, the task force in each school system will have the opportunity to write specific objectives stating how and when these criteria are to be met. All the details of your plan are decided upon locally. Thus, while we have common goals, we have as many paths to reaching them as we have member school systems.

What is the Consortium strategy? The Consortium effort is based on a three-pronged strategy that is similar in many ways to the strategy used in other Right to Read states. The three prongs are process, key personnel and support.

Right to Read is a process, not a program. It is a process directed toward building a failure-proof reading program that meets the needs of your own particular community. The process includes five steps: setting goals and objectives, conducting a needs assessment, building a program based on priority needs, implementing the program including staff development and evaluation. We believe that through this process you will be able to build a program that enables all students to learn to read. It will take time and help but success is possible.

The second part of the strategy is to select personnel who will work through this process, persons who are committed to achieving Right to Read goals. The LEA director is the one who has the authority and responsibility to manage the entire effort, to keep groups goal-directed and communications channels open. The Task Force is the work group that moves through the program-building process. It should be representative of all levels of education and all areas of the curriculum. The Advisory Council builds school-community relations, assesses community interests and needs and sponsors community projects.

The third aspect of the strategy is to get support for the program that is devised. All of the personnel involved need to communicate well with the groups they represent so that a general awareness is created as a basis for achieving support. In addition, a specific plan for gathering support is helpful. But of all the groups whose support is important, your support is most important. You control the destiny of your school systems to a great extent and little can be accomplished without your active involvement and support.

That's a brief overview of what the Consortium is, how it came about, its goals and strategies for achieving them. You play a crucial role in making Right to Read a successful enterprise. We are delighted that you have come in such large numbers to discuss that role and hope this proves to be both an interesting and informative conference.

THE ROLE OF ADMINISTRATION IN THE RIGHT TO READ EFFORT

—Richard C. Wallace, Jr.

The Role of Administration in the Right to Read Effort is the theme of this conference. In addition to listening to speakers on this topic, you will participate in discussions that center on the problems faced and the possible alternative actions that might be taken in establishing that role. In accepting the task to give the keynote address, I agreed to speak to some "ideal" roles as a background for these later discussions. I will lead up to that by exploring some management concerns that provide ideas about the context in which these roles operate.

Right to Read from the point of view of administration must be studied from several different perspectives. I'll review some management factors that relate to Right to Read and the administrative and even teaching roles involved. Next I'll speak to Right to Read as a planned change phenomenon. Then, I'll provide you with a model that could be used at the local school level. And finally I'll tell you some of the things we did in Fitchburg during the past year and, hopefully, what we will do in the future. From the information reviewed in these four areas, I'll draw some inferences about "ideal" roles administrators can play in implementing the Right to Read process.

Management Factors

Everyone involved in the Right to Read process from the superintendent to the classroom teacher in some way is a manager. Whereas at the district level the Right to Read director must manage the whole program, at the classroom level the teacher is a manager of instruction. Since management is everyone's responsibility I'd like to speak briefly to some key tasks of management as they relate to instructional management or to Right to Read specifically.

MacKenzie identifies three central core functions of a manager that deal with people, things and ideas. Perhaps the "people" aspect of management is the most important file. It clearly is the most important task with respect to leadership.

Leadership can be defined in many ways. I prefer to think of it as a means of influencing people to achieve desired goals. Besides this motivational aspect of leadership, another important function of a manager is to make sure that communications channels are open wide so that all parties concerned with the process understand what is going on. Then too, a manager in a leadership position has to be involved in certain sequential functions: staffing, directing the staff once assembled, and controlling and monitoring the staff toward the achievement of goals.

I'll expand a little here on what these sequential functions entail. Now, staffing has some rather straight forward functions of selecting people, orienting them to the job and training them when needed. But I think one often-overlooked function of management with respect to leadership is developing people, helping them to become better professionals, providing them with training experiences so that they might better serve their particular clientele. With regard to the directing function of the manager, centrally the intent is to bring about purposeful, goal-oriented behavior and the achievement of objectives on the part of all parties concerned. Some of the activities a manager must engage in in the directing role are delegating authority and responsibility to others, motivating and inspiring them, persuading them to achieve the goals established for them and coordinating their work. These aspects of management are certainly important but there are two functions that are even more important: the

Dr. Richard C. Wallace, Jr. is Superintendent of Schools in Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

management of differences among people and the management of the change process. In addition to the staffing and directing functions, the remaining sequential function mentioned above involves controlling and monitoring the staff toward the achievement of goals. An important task here is to establish a reporting system. And in this instance I don't mean just reporting on students to parents but reporting as it relates to all persons involved in Right to Read. Other functions are developing performance standards for all parties involved in the process, identifying the conditions that will exist once you have achieved the goals you set for yourself and clearly measuring the results so you will know when you have arrived where you desire to be. All of these ideas have related to the "people" aspect of management.

The "thing" aspect of management, so to speak, basically deals with administration, decision making, planning, and so forth. In this regard, it is important that all parties in the process know exactly what they are to do, that each person have a job responsibility and position description so that role perceptions and lines of authority are clear, that the relationship among roles is delineated and that an organizational structure is established within which people can work effectively.

The "ideas" aspect of management, of course, refers to the conceptual aspects of developing a valuable program: making sure that ideas are flowing freely, that people are successfully analyzing problem situations they are involved in, that they are planning accurately and that they are supported by clearly delineated policies, program goals, objectives, strategies and budget. So, the three core functions of management relate to people, things and ideas.

Planned Change

The second perspective I'd like you to consider is the view of Right to Read as a planned change phenomenon. Now, with regard to the management of planned change there are several questions one needs to consider. They include:

Who are the targets of the change process?

What strategies will be used to attain the desired outcomes with the target population?

What should the role of the change agent be in regard to this?

There is nothing mystical about the change process; we are all involved in it one way or another although we may not label it that way. Basically, any planned change involves a four-step process: diagnosis of the problem situation, planning of alternative strategies, implementation of those strategies and evaluation.

With regard to Right to Read as a planned change process, I think it is critically important that the unit of change or the unit of analysis be considered the school, the individual school, because this is the critical unit of change in education; it is not the school system *per se*. The central office is not the unit for change. It may function as a catalyst and it certainly functions as a supporter, but the individual school must be conceived as the prime unit.

What does this mean for Right to Read? It means that you must think of the individual school as a social system. Viewing it as a social system, you must think of all the interpersonal relations that operate within that setting. Then, you must think of the individual school as a management system giving attention to the application of management skills and tools. And, most importantly, you must think of the principal as the key change agent in the entire process.

Planned change is more successful when the climate is healthy. The climate in any school depends upon a number of things: the communications patterns, the explicit and implicit norms or the notion of what is appropriate in the environment, the roles and relationships of teachers and administrators and the role perceptions they have of each other. It depends upon the influence relationships that exist in school, who the influence leaders are and the reward and sanction structure that exists within the building.

Some of the basic requirements for a healthy school climate are clearly stated goals and an effective communications network. This does not mean a simple exchange of information. That is part of the process, but more important than memos are the skills of giving and receiving feedback, being able to paraphrase what another person says, being able to check perceptions during the course of a meeting, being able to describe one's feelings during the course of a change process, and being able to describe behavior.

In addition, conflict management is a very critical factor in a healthy school environment. It is of great importance that an administrator encourage divergent thinking in respect to a topic under discussion. But the more divergent thinking is encouraged, the more conflicts that will arise. And it is imperative that a manager be able to resolve conflicts. They are inevitable. The principal as a manager of planned change must be able to bring conflict into the open. He must expect that there will be power struggles among the various faculty members. He must work to resolve those power struggles so that energies are channeled productively rather than destructively within that environment. He must expect role conflicts among the various parties that are going to be engaged in the process of delivering Right to Read in a particular building. And he must expect stress from without — maybe from other schools, other principals, other teachers, and possibly from the community itself. So, one of the first functions of the principal as change agent, one of the important functions in that role, is to help develop a healthy climate within the school.

Let me state a few assumptions about the people involved in the change process that the principal as a change agent needs to keep in mind:

1. Most people want to grow and develop as persons and as professionals.
2. Most individuals want their organization to succeed.
3. Most individuals need a reference group in the organization. They need to be part of that reference group, so peer groups are usually the most important reference groups.
4. Individuals tend to support change if they have participated in the planning of that change.
5. Individuals have memberships in several groups; therefore, effective performance on the part of these individuals requires both effective leadership and membership behaviors.

These critical assumptions about individuals are very important for the entire change process.

It is also critically important to recognize and understand that every change effort involves changes in attitudes and these may not come easily. As one social psychologist has said, attitudes must be unfrozen, new ones learned and then the new attitudes must be refrozen in order for effective behavior to be achieved. Due to the effect of the individual's attitudes, a major finding emerging from socio-psychological research and educational research is that the best place to begin the change process is where an identified problem exists because where you have a problem that is perceived (although it may not be defined) you have a readiness for change.

Moving back again to the requirements for a healthy climate, other critical factors are: openness in the environment, well planned and well conducted meetings to improve task productivity and group maintenance, individual and group involvement in the problem solving process leading up to decision making and evaluation. All of these factors are essential to the role of the principal as change agent.

A number of research findings have emerged with regard to the principal as the change agent and the school as the unit for change which I think have important implications for Right to Read, or any other project for that matter. It has been well established during the past five to ten years that principals need a new set of managerial skills if they are going to encourage and facilitate change. The management of group processes that I just referred to, skills related to effective planning and implementation and the ability to identify the hallmarks of success in a program have been shown to be critically important.

The second important finding emerging from research is that principals and staff members must pass through identifiable stages in the change process in order to achieve the goals they desire. I'd like to

tell you about a project supporting this finding that I was involved with two years ago and still am involved with when I can find the time. The project, conducted at the University of Texas, is called the Concern Based Adoption Model (CBAM). The study emerged from the research of the late Dr. Frances Fuller of the University of Texas. It identified basic concerns that teachers go through in their training and beginning teaching experiences. Those of us who worked with her saw a parallel between the concerns of beginning teachers that she had identified and the concerns of experienced teachers and administrators during periods of innovation in the schools. So, with her help we developed the following two sets of variables: one called Stages of Concern About Innovation and the second called Levels of Use. Let me define very briefly what each of the stages means and give you some examples. Then I'll do the same for each of the levels.

STAGES OF CONCERN ABOUT INNOVATION

Stage 0 **Unawareness:** No indication of interest in or concern about the innovation is expressed.
Typical Responses:
I am not seeking information about the innovation.
I have almost no information about the innovation.

Stage 1 **Informational:** The potential user considers substantive aspects (characteristics, effects, requirements for use) in a selfless manner.
Typical Responses:
I would like to learn more about this innovation.
I would like to know how this program is better than the one we have now.

Stage 2 **Personal:** The potential user expresses uncertainty about the organization's reward structure, commitment, and financial or status implications for self and colleagues.
Typical Responses:
I would like to know how my role will change.
I am concerned about whether or not I will be rewarded for my work.

Stage 3 **Management:** The potential user considers issues related to efficiency, organization, management, scheduling and time demands.
Typical Responses:
I am concerned about class preparation time.
I am concerned over my inability to efficiently organize myself in this program.

Stage 4 **Consequence:** The potential user considers the impact of the innovation on students in his immediate sphere of influence.
Typical Responses:
I am concerned about student attitudes toward this innovation.
I would like to give feedback to students about their progress.

Stage 5 **Collaboration:** The potential user focuses on increasing impact on students through collaboration with others.
Typical Responses:
I am sharing ideas about the program with colleagues.
I would like to know what organizational changes would help me coordinate my efforts with others in our use of the innovation.

Stage 6 **Refocusing:** The potential user considers the more universal benefits of the innovation including the possibility of major changes or replacement with a more powerful alternative.

Typical Responses:
I would like to modify our use of the innovation based on the experiences of our students.
I have knowledge of some other materials that might work better.

In reviewing this sequence of stages you can see that once an innovation is introduced, the focus of concern progresses from self to task to impact on students. An important thing to remember in this regard is that there are identifiable stages of concerns. Perhaps you can relate your own experiences to this to give it more meaning in your own situation. As an observer of change, you will begin to recognize that people are at different stages in their concern about innovation. And, as a change agent, it is imperative that you begin to identify at what level they are in order that you may meet them and treat them at that level. If they are expressing "self" concerns, then accept them, counsel them, talk with them in small groups, help them to voice their concerns because unless they do, they are not going to be able to solve them. Once they get to the "task" level of concern, they will be involved in the mechanical aspects of it and there are certain kinds of help that can be given to move them on here, too, such as demonstrations of teaching, observing others who are expert with the innovation, methods to use with that type of intervention. Finally, when persons have reached the renewal stage, help them to move on beyond themselves to establish new horizons.

The second set of variables mentioned previously as being associated with the adoption of innovation is termed Levels of Use. Given that we consider Right to Read as innovation adoption, these variables are also pertinent to your task ahead.

Now, a basic assumption in regard to these phenomena is that as a person uses an innovation he goes through a growth process. He uses it initially in a very ineffective and inefficient way and moves toward using it very effectively and efficiently. The levels are presented briefly below:

LEVELS OF USE (LoU) OF INNOVATION

LoU **Non-Use:** The user has little knowledge of or involvement with the innovation.
Typical Responses:
I'm really not looking for anything right now.
I am not using the innovation and have no plans to.

LoU 1 **Orientation:** The user takes action to learn more detailed information about the innovation.
Typical Responses:
I'm looking at material pertaining to the innovation and considering using it some time in the future.
I've attended a workshop and sat in on classes where teachers are using it.

LoU 2 **Preparation:** The user makes a decision to use the innovation by establishing a time to begin.
Typical Responses:
I'm looking through materials, attending workshops, and getting organized to use it.
I'm going to start using it next September.

LoU 3 **Mechanical Use:** Changes, if any, and use are dominated by user needs.
Typical Responses:
Most of my effort is going into organizing materials and keeping things going as smoothly as possible.
I'm planning every night for what I will do the next day. I know in general what I will do next month but have not made detailed arrangements.

LoU 4A **Routine:** A routine pattern of use is stabilized.
Typical Responses:
This year has worked out beautifully. I'm sure there will be changes next year but basically we'll use the same ideas.
The students adjusted so nicely to the innovation that I haven't felt I needed to make changes.

LoU 4B **Refinement:** Changes in use of the innovation are based on formal or informal evaluation and made to increase client outcomes.
Typical Responses:
I'm keeping activities that work well with my students and changing those that aren't as effective.
I recently developed a more detailed assessment instrument to gain more specific information on the effectiveness of the innovation.

LoU 5 **Integration:** Changes are initiated based on input from and in coordination with what colleagues are doing.
Typical Responses:
Working together helps to avoid repetition in content for our students.
Not everyone has the skills to make this innovation relevant for students. For that reason, I've worked together with another teacher for two years and recently a third teacher joined us.

LoU 6 **Renewal:** Alternatives to or modifications of the innovation are explored.
Typical Responses:
I am beginning to see evidence here and elsewhere in the state that several other innovations may be more effective.
I'm seriously thinking of combining use of another innovation with the one I'm using now. The combination ought to be more valuable for students.

It may help you to relate these two sets of variables if they are placed in apposition to one another adding a brief indication of the focus of the concerns at each stage, as in the following chart:

Variables Associated With Stages in the Change Process

Stage of Concern	Focus of Concern	Level of Use
Unawareness	None	0 Non-use
Informational	Substantive aspects	1 Orientation
Personal	Roles of self and others	2 Preparation
Management	Task and process	3 Mechanical Use
Consequences	Relevance for clients	4A Routine 4B Refinement
Collaboration	Work with colleagues to improve impact	5 Integration
Refocusing	Long range benefits	6 Renewal

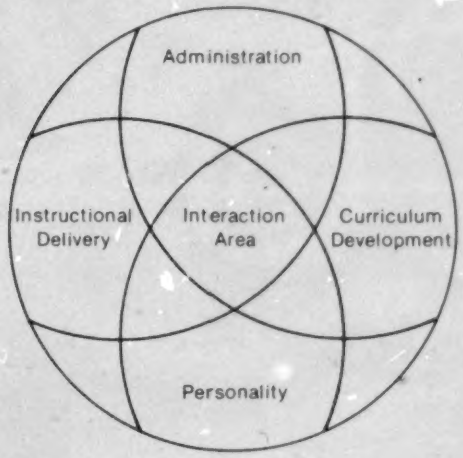
With respect to the planned change process, if one considers these two sets of variables — i.e., the stage of concern a user has about an innovation and the level of use attained — as relevant, then it's

important to recognize that you can intervene and do something about teachers' concerns or level of use of an innovation. The basic purpose of the research at the University of Texas is to try to shorten the time it takes to pass through the stages and/or levels to reach the criterion. There is a firm belief that if you can identify a teacher's level of concern you can resolve that and get on to the next concern more efficiently. Further, if you can identify the level of use of an innovation, you can help teachers to master that level and move forward. The ultimate goal, then, is to reduce the time required to get an innovation into a classroom. We've not been very effective in education in getting innovations into the classroom and getting them to work effectively. I think John Goodlad said it best when he stated: "The educational innovations of the sixties were blunted on the classroom door." They didn't get through.

Well, what does this have to do with Right to Read? From my perspective, it has everything to do with it. If we conceive of Right to Read as a planned change process, if we pay attention to the requirements of the planned change process, if we acquire the management skills that are necessary to function effectively, and if we recognize the stage of concern and the level of use where each person is functioning, then we can intervene with differential treatments and accelerate the adoption of Right to Read and make it more effective.

School Model

Now, let's take a look at Right to Read at the building level. Changing perspective again, we'll consider a school building as a unit that includes four subsystems that interact and interrelate. They may be visualized and defined as follows:



Interaction Model

SCHOOL SUBSYSTEMS

Definitions

Administrative subsystem: operates and maintains the school, provides leadership and management of planned change to facilitate goal attainment.

Curriculum development subsystem: performs the adaptive function for the school by developing new approaches and identifying new materials.

Instructional delivery subsystem: performs the functions concerned with student goal achievement, instructional settings, methodologies, use of materials and evaluations.

Personality subsystem: takes into account the unique characteristics and previous experiences of faculty and students.

When you view Right to Read as functioning in relation to the four subsystems presented above, then it is clear that reading does not exist in isolation. It is a function of the administrative subsystem, the curriculum development subsystem, the instructional delivery subsystem and the personality subsystem as they interact with one another. The basic implication that reading cannot be conceived of as being separate and apart from anything else in the school environment is critically important. The model tells us, furthermore, that leadership is highly situational — that leadership in one building will not be the same as leadership in another school building because leadership is a function of the particular characteristics of the leader, the follower and the situation itself. And, they are not the same from one school setting to another. In addition, by pointing out that reading is interdependent upon all four subsystems, it must be viewed, at least from my perspective, as the most integrative function of the school. The point where all these four subsystems overlap is where reading lies, for me, because reading permeates the entire program. It is not something that is taught between nine and eleven in the morning. It is something that

permeates the entire information processing environment of the school. I would urge all of you to take this view toward reading.

There are specific planning and program review tools that can be used by the principal, the Right to Read director or by central office personnel to operationalize the Right to Read program in a school building.

The first step in this process is to gather together a task force usually comprised of the building principal, at least one central office person, at least two representative teachers and at least two representative parents. This task force must perform many important functions in implementing the Right to Read process: [1]

1. Develop records of who is involved in the process: administrators, teachers, learners.
2. Review the components and status of your current program.
3. Establish criteria of excellence and rate your program against them.
4. Set realistic priorities.
5. Review effective programs used by others to reach your priority goals.
6. Agree on goals and objectives.
7. Develop a plan of action.
8. Do a cost analysis of your plan.
9. Conduct a comprehensive inventory of your resources (materials, equipment, etc.)
10. Set beginning and completion dates.

These steps are critically important to the success of your effort.

Fitchburg Program

One thing we accomplished last year was to get school committee agreement on five basic goals for the school system.

I'd like to share them with you.

FITCHBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF GOALS

Goal I. Command of the Fundamental Processes of Learning.
The major goal of the school system must be to insure the attainment of the basic skills of learning by all students. Mastery of what are commonly known as the "three R's" must be the focal point of our school system's effort. Each child entering and leaving the Fitchburg Public Schools has a right to expect to be literate. He should be *proficient* in all means of communication (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) commensurate with his native abilities. The resources of the school system must be allocated to implement and evaluate programs to insure that this basic right of students is achieved.

Goal II. Humanistic Education for All Students.
Every child has the right *to be known* as fully as it is possible by the significant others in his learning environment. Teachers, administrators, counselors, and other personnel should strive to gather diverse information about each youngster assigned to their charge. It is the responsibility of the adults in the

[1] These tools were originally developed for use in Right to Read school based sites. They have been published by the OE Right to Read Office in the *Right to Read Assessment and Planning Handbook*.

environment to *know* their students. With respect to academic background, we must have detailed information on students relative to the achievement of the fundamental **processes** of learning, as well as content knowledge outcomes. Above and beyond that, it is important that we know each child as a person — his/her needs, desires, interests, goals, etc. Teachers and administrators *must take time* out of the regular school day to achieve this comprehensive knowledge of the child. Only with full knowledge of each pupil can the learning environment be so arranged that it maximizes the potential for personal growth for each youngster in our charge. Schools exist not for administrative convenience, nor for convenience of teachers; schools exist for the purpose of helping each child to become the best possible person that he can become. This goal is best expressed as a humanistic approach to education.

Goal III. Career Development.
Each pupil graduating from the Fitchburg Public Schools has a right to be trained at a level of entry skill in some occupation as he enters the world of work. Further, each child entering the Fitchburg Public Schools has a right to expect to gain an understanding of the range of career choices that are best suited to his talents and interests. The school program must provide the opportunity for the pupil to become aware of various career choices and also provide him/her with an opportunity to gain relevant experience so that the ultimate choice is an informed one.

Goal IV. Quality Learning Environments.
Each child in the Fitchburg Public Schools has the right to expect his learning environment to be reasonably commensurate with that offered to other pupils. A goal for the system must be to provide adequate learning space so that equality of educational opportunity is reasonably achieved. Therefore, the system must renovate, expand or build facilities to meet this goal within the financial constraints that confront the city.

Goal V. Dynamic Learning Community for Professionals.
In order for education to be a dynamic force for each learner, and in order that personal and professional growth of teachers and administrators is assured, the school system must provide opportunities for teachers and administrators to "renew" themselves professionally. Each teacher and administrator has a personal responsibility to insure his own professional growth; the School Department, however has an added responsibility to nurture that growth, and to provide opportunities for new ideas and approaches to be developed. The professionals within the learning community must be sensitive to problems, trends, and new approaches in education. Further, the professionals must seek out problems and generate alternative solutions in order to keep the school system moving ahead constructively. Through the achievement of a dynamic learning environment for professionals we can be assured that quality education is being offered to each pupil in the Fitchburg Public Schools.

After achieving agreement on goals, we identified reading as a top priority in our school system. We supported our Right to Read director, Eleanor Magane, in her outstanding efforts during our first year in Right to Read. Under Eleanor's energetic leadership we had our own Right to Read buttons made in Fitchburg; we had a large banner raised across Main Street that said: *Readers Are Leaders;* and we placed placards on buses and in places all over the city where the public could view them. Through Eleanor's hard work we hosted the spring staff development session of the New England Consortium in Fitchburg. I provided her with a clerk to help with the administration of the program in order that she might fulfill the goals and asperations we had set forth. And that she did! We had a very exciting and dynamic year. A great deal of awareness was built about Right to Read and its importance in Fitchburg. Bob Moynihan and Nancy Waters inherited a tremendous foundation on which to build the program.

Additionally, when Eleanor retired, I raised the position of Director of Reading to Manager of Instruction. This was to communicate to teachers and administrators — indeed, to the public at large — my commitment to reading in Fitchburg. This is one of the most important positions in our system and I wanted a person with a reading background in that position. So, I've made a commitment.

We've implemented several management devices as part of our management information system to help administrators plan better. Each administrator has what is called a Management by Objectives (MBO) focusing form on which he establishes objectives for the year and criteria for judging whether the objectives are achieved. Further, each administrator is developing a long-range planning document called a Program Memorandum in which he or she will lay out the plans for the next three to five years.

We conducted a baseline data gathering study so that we would know where we were when we started new programs. We gathered student achievement data and climate data within all of the schools. The administrative staff was reorganized in order to assign to the principal of each building — and this is a strong bias of mine — the authority and the responsibility for moving his programs. In effect, the principal is captain of his ship. The curriculum leaders, the program managers and the supervisors who work toward improving the management of instruction facilitate the principal's achieving the goals of the school.

I view my role basically as setting priorities; providing leadership, stimulation and resources; and serving in a facilitating role to the management structure by seeking financial and human resources to achieve the goals. Most importantly, given my background in research and evaluation, I am as sure as I stand here before you that the future of education in terms of implementing successful programs lies in the hands of the principal in each school.

Ideal Roles

Let's take a brief look now at "ideal" roles that can be played in the implementation of Right to Read.

Principal. The most crucial role is that of principal. As a manager of planned change, as a manager of the four subsystems in his or her building, it is important that the principal have or acquire skills in planning, management, facilitation, problem solving, communication and decision making. The principal must know when and how to ask for help. None of us can be all things to all men, so it is important that we know our limitations and seek help and information when we need it.

A critical role of the principal is that he develop a vision of what the school ought to be at some future time. Then, he must have some charisma in order to lead effectively and to inspire his teachers. He must help teachers to develop skills in assessing needs, specifying objectives for students and providing feedback to the principal regarding curriculum and instructional materials. The principal has an important role to play in developing the role of the teacher.

Reading Specialist. I would view the reading specialist as a consultant to the principal, one who helps the principal shape the reading program in the building. The reading specialist cannot assume the final authority; that has to be in the hands of the principal.

An important role for the reading specialist to play is that of consultant to teachers, conducting demonstration lessons, co-teaching with teachers, supervising and evaluating the program to improve it, assisting teachers to gather resources and tests and evaluating student learning.

Another important role for the reading specialist is to lead the reading curriculum development effort under the direction of the principal. Also, this specialist should provide what I call the integrationist view of reading to the faculty, working to improve the use of reading skills in all academic areas, particularly at the upper intermediate and secondary levels. The study skills must be developed effectively in each area.

The principal must hold the reading specialist accountable and effect a very extensive and good working relationship with him or her.

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. Clearly this person must support and guide the principal in efforts to develop the program. The assistant superintendent must act as the devil's advocate, constantly testing the principal and conducting an intrinsic evaluation to make sure the program efforts hang together. What is more, he must make sure the principal has the vision of where he is going and why, and how he will know when he has arrived.

The assistant superintendent must insure that the system as a whole is moving in the direction of goal achievement, particularly with respect to reading. He must work with all administrators to stimulate and assist the formulation of plans to ensure coordinated movement toward the achievement of those goals. And, he must cause evaluation — from needs assessment to program evaluation — to be conducted and reported.

Right to Read Director. The Right to Read director must work with all of the relevant parties in the school system from the principal to the central office staff and also with the public to explain the goals of Right to Read and to help each of them in whatever ways are necessary to plan and implement those Right to Read strategies developed by the task force. The Right to Read director must help to evaluate the impact of the program upon the most important clientele — the students. The development of awareness in the general public, obtaining involvement and building commitment is also a critical role.

To summarize what has been said with regard to the role of administration in the Right to Read effort, we must recognize first that everyone in some way is a manager. Implementing Right to Read involves the management of planned change. The prime unit of change is the school and the key change agent is the principal. There are tools available to guide the principal in the change process. Also, assistance is available from other personnel in the various management roles. The principal must develop the skills to use the available human and material resources effectively.

We should look at the school as comprised of four subsystems with reading playing the integrative function. Reading then can be viewed as permeating all of the information processing activities of the school.

Finally, there are several roles that can be played to assist the Right to Read effort. We looked at ideal roles of the principal, assistant superintendent, reading specialist and Right to Read director. I hope these ideas and ideals will prove helpful in providing you with background for your work today and tomorrow.

PROGRAMMING READING FAILURE OUT OF EXISTENCE: A BRIEF FOR THE BELIEF

—Hugh Schoephoerster

My thesis is that those of us who are vitally concerned with literacy need to be mindful of two populations. We must be concerned about those citizens in our country who have failed our educational system and those who have been failed by that system. You may have noted an advertisement that appeared recently in *Newsweek* magazine which reported that twenty-one million Americans over sixteen can't read a want ad. Reading a want ad is, of course, one of the tests of functional literacy. This means that about fifteen percent of our population over sixteen years of age have failed or been failed by the existing system. We must be concerned about the literacy need that exists here, but it is just as important, if not more important, that we become concerned with that system lest each new year continue to see an additional generation of reading failures produced to join those who have been turned out in the past.

Dimensions of the Reading Problem

I noted the other day the statement by Senator Beall of Maryland who, together with Senator Eagleton from Missouri, was a principal architect of Public Law 93-380, Title VII, the National Reading Improvement Act. Senator Beall was addressing the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HEW when he asked to quote from an article that appeared in the *Dallas Morning News*. The statement was this:

> "At commencement exercises throughout the city recently, anywhere from 500 to 1,000 of Dallas' 9,000 graduating seniors, according to official estimates, walked across stages to be handed diplomas they could not read. Barely able to read, many will wind up with poor jobs or no jobs at all. Still in school, youngsters who are either unable to read at all or read only at the most elementary level can be found in almost every one of Dallas' 43 secondary schools. Dallas School Superintendent Nolan Estes has estimated more than 20,000 of the public school system's 70,000 secondary students read at least two or more years below grade level."

Again, there are two dimensions to our problem. We have those who have failed the system in the past or been failed by the system, and we have those who are still in the system and on their way to failure. We must do something for both populations, but what? What might the answer be?

Perhaps Leon Lessinger provides a clue. Lessinger says in his book, *Every Kid a Winner: Accountability in Education*, on page 30:

> "The point is rather to serve clear notice on the schools that society expects all its children to learn at least the basic skills, that failures are to be regarded less as the fault of the child or of his background than of the school, and that the proper response to failure (as principals are fond of telling miscreants) is not excuses but reform, and in this case reform by the schools."

In other words, society is no longer willing to sit still and accept our explanations for pupil failure when they take such form as: the youngster is black, or Indian and you know how little value Indians place on education beyond the third grade, or that the youngster's parents didn't get beyond eighth grade or their dad earns less than $5,000 a year. Society is not willing any longer to accept those excuses. Someone once said education is the only operating system in America that blames its products for its own

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failures. You never hear General Motors say the reason they don't sell cars is because the materials that they use are inferior.

Lessinger also wrote, on page 15, this:

> "A failing school, no matter how bravely administered, is still a failing school. To get the results that parents, their representatives, and even students are rightly demanding, we must learn how to change.

A recent United States Office of Education briefing paper said it this way:

> "Right to Read concerns itself with more than the present. It is concerned also about what tomorrow will look like if measures are not taken to change the system which allows illiterate people to come out of our schools."

It was stated in another USOE briefing paper:

> "Right to Read is an education reform program in the area of reading."

What is the common refrain in these four citations? We are going to have to do something about the system! We are going to have to *reform the system!* We are goint to have to *change the system!* No longer can we justify ministering to an existing system that allows so many illiterates to come out of its schools every year.

Of course, the question naturally follows, "Change to what?" I would like to suggest that perhaps the answer is best stated in this publication, *Reading Disorders in the United States: A Report of the HEW National Advisory Committee on Dyslexia and Related Reading Disorder.* On page 34, it is said this way:

> "There are two theoretical approaches that might be taken in an effort to eliminate reading failure. They fall into two general categories: 1) Improvement of regular classroom instruction so that no child will fail, or 2) the development of supplementary programs whereby those actually failing reading can be recognized at the earliest possible moment so that immediate intervention can occur. Ideally, regular classroom instruction should be of a quality to insure that no child fails, thus rendering supplementary programs unnecessary. However, the fact is that some 15% of all children today are failing readers so each school system is thus presented with the problem of handling a large proportion of those students who are already or about to be stricken from the mainstream of the educational process."

Just think! We have fifty-one and a half million youngsters in our schools in this country and unless something dramatic occurs we can fully expect that eight million will leave the system to join those twenty-one million that are already out there.

Need for Reform

Change is needed. Change to what? Change to the type of system that prevents failure. What we so desperately need is a failure-proof, zero-defect type of program which could become the precursor of a failure-proof, zero defect kind of educational system. Why do people have to fail?

Is this going to be easy? Of course not. Any type of reform is extremely difficult. Lessinger spoke to that point also when he quoted John Gardner, the present chairman of Common Cause and the former secretary of HEW who wrote in his book, *No Easy Victories:*

> "We are poor at problem-solving that requires the revision of social structures, the renewal of institutions, the invention of new human arrangements. Not only are the problems in this realm exceedingly complex, but in some cases we are rather strongly motivated not to solve

them. Solving them would endanger old familiar ways of doing things. Painful stalemates in public policy are caused by the tendency of outworn institutions both to resist reforms from within, and, in the case of a near monopoly, to discourage the rise of competitors."

The three points I have thus far attempted to make are (1) we need a reform program, (2) the reform that we are seeking is the prevention of failure, and (3) we recognize that achieving reform is difficult.

Now we know that no one wants to preside over a failure. No one wants to know that he or she is destined to fail right from the very beginning. There has to be something that gives us hope, that gives us reason to believe that it can be made better, that things can be different. We all need a star to which we can hitch our wagon.

Reading Curriculum

Well I believe, I really believe, that there are reasons that give us hope that we can turn this thing around. There is a basis for the belief that failure-proof reading program is possible, and it has to do with curriculum, the way curriculum is ordered, and the fundamental instructional and organizational implications of a curriculum that is so ordered. Let me try to explain what I mean.

Defining the Scope of the Curriculum

Suppose we were to write a curriculum. You know the time-honored definition of what a curriculum is: all of the educational experiences for which the school assumes the responsibility of providing to youngsters. I don't care if you read Beck, Cook, and Kearney; Smith, Stanley, and Shores; Taba; or Ragan; they all define curriculum the same way. A reading curriculum therefore consists of all those educational experiences that we believe an individual must have in order that that individual may come to be able to read. Those educational experiences are those elements a person needs to learn.

Knowledge. Suppose we are going to write this curriculum in reading. We would probably begin by asking ourselves three fundamental questions. The first question might be, "What are the things that a person will have to know in order to read? What kind of facts, what kind of knowledge, what information must a person have in order to read?" For example, when I see this mark called the period of ellipsis, I have to know that that mark can indicate that one or more words have been omitted in a direct quotation or that it can indicate that someone stopped in their talking of their own volition or because they were interrupted.

Or, when I see this mark called a virgule, I need to know that this mark can mean the same thing as does the word "or". For example, you may come to the doctor's office on Monday/Tuesday. You have a choice. You may come on either of those two days. Now that's knowledge, isn't it? That's information. That's fact. A reader also needs to know that this mark can mean the same thing as does the word "per" as in the illustration, "He traveled down the street at 35 miles/hour." That's knowledge, isn't it? A reader also needs to know that the mark is used to indicate the end of a line of poetry when the lines of a poem are written successively rather than having each new line of poetry on a separate line. What separates the lines of a poem? Sure, a virgule does.

Or, when I see this particular letter, the grapheme "s," if I am going to be a reader, I have got to know that the letter stands for the sound that I hear at the beginning of sip. I need to know that the letter can stand for the sound that I hear at the end of his. I also need to know that that letter can stand for the sound that I hear at the beginning of sure. I also need to know that that letter can stand for the sound that I hear in the middle of occasion. Four different sounds to be associated with one particular form. A reader needs to know four phonemes for this single grapheme. If we answer the question fully, "What are all of the things that a person will have to know in order to read?" we will come up with a very long list.

Skills. But you know that reading is more than just knowing things. It is also doing things. You all have children who know their phonics yet are incapable of using their knowledge of letter-sound associations to decode words. So we must ask ourselves a second question, "In addition to all of these things a person needs to know, what are all of the things that a person will need to be able to do? What kinds of *skills* does a person need to have? What kinds of strategies, techniques, tools does a person need to have in order to read?" When I come to a word that contains this particular letter, how do I go about independently determining which of the four sounds that I know this letter, s, can represent is the sound that the letter represents in this particular word? I have got to know how to do that. Or, how do I go about determining which of the three meanings a virgule can have is the meaning that the virgule represents by the way the author elected to use this particular punctuation mark? I have got to have a way of doing that. Or, when I come to the metaphor, "Billy, you are a monkey," or, "Daddy is an old bear tonight," how do I go about determining which of the several meanings each of these metaphors can have is the meaning that the author had in mind when he chose to use that particular bit of non-literal language? I have got to have a strategy, a scheme, a technique for doing that. So when we answer the question fully, "What are all of the things a person will need to be able do *do*?" and add that list to the prior list of all of the things that a person will need to *know*, the list of what a person needs to learn in order to read is considerably lengthened.

Attitudes. But we also know that reading is more than just knowing and doing. It is also feeling. We hear a great deal about the affective consequences of what it is we do to and with youngsters. You have heard the expression that a person who can read but who doesn't is no better off than one who can't. We need to be concerned not only that we produce individuals who can read, but that we produce individuals who do read, who develop an abiding interest in reading quality reading material for information and enjoyment. We need youngsters who have a conscience relative to reading so that when they come to a word they don't know they won't skip it, but they will invest the time to decode it or if it's a word that represents a meaning that is unknown to them they will invest the time to learn that additional meaning. That's conscience, an attitude, a way of feeling. A few years ago we said attitude is caught and not taught. We don't believe that any more. We believe we can teach attitude just as surely as we can teach letter-sound associations. It is important that we do all of these things we need to do in order that youngsters come to feel good about themselves and that they come to feel good about reading.

We believe that when you answer those three questions fully: What are all of the things a person 1) needs to *know* in order to read, 2) needs to be able to *do* in order to read, and 3) that we would like for people to *feel* as they learn to read, in essence you have defined, have you not, the magnitude of the reading curriculum. You have determined the scope of the reading curriculum, you have determined the taxonomy of the reading curriculum, you have determined the array which constitutes the reading curriculum, you have determined the parameters of the reading curriculum. You, in essence, have determined what it is that stands between illiteracy and literacy. This is what a person needs to learn in order to read. And there is nothing so esoteric about this, so difficult, so mystical, that no one can understand it or only a chosen few can understand. And there is nothing infinite about this. It is a very finite kind of thing. It is not a never-ending task. Eventually you will get the last thing taught. So all this is a listing of what it is that a person needs to learn in order to read. That is what a reading curriculum is. Curriculum is the "what" of education. The purpose of instruction, of course, is for the teacher to bring the youngster and the curriculum together. It is as simple as that.

Sequencing the Elements of the Curriculum

The job that you have just finished, the defining of the elements of the curriculum, is the easy job. The next job is much harder. It is obvious that not all of this that must be learned can be learned concurrently. So what we must do next is to determine the order in which all of these things are to be learned. We have got to sequence the scope of our curriculum.

In the order of difficulty. Curriculum writers will tell you that theoretically there are three different ways of sequencing curriculum. One way, of course, is for the authorship to look at all of this that needs to be learned and to ask itself the question, "Of these things that a person needs to learn, what are the things that would seem to be not too hard, not too easy, for youngsters of average aptitude who are five years of age?" because those are the things that we are going to ask the kindergarten teacher to teach. Then it would ask itself the question, "Of those things that remain, what would be the things, the elements, that would seem to be not too hard, not too easy, for youngsters of average aptitude who are six years of age to learn?" because those are the things we are going to ask the first grade teacher to teach. Now, here's an example of sequencing curriculum by attempting to match the adjudged difficulty of the learning with the adjudged ability of the learner. Is this the way reading curriculum is sequenced? Of course not. Social studies curriculum, yes; reading curriculum, no. In social studies, for example, in grade one we ask the teacher to teach things dealing with home and family; in grade 2, the neighborhood; grade 3, the community; grade 4, the state; grade 5, the nation; and in grade 6, the world. There is an example of sequencing curriculum by attempting to take into account the difficulty of the learning and the ability of the learner, the idea being that young children cannot handle matters that are strange spatially and temporally. Young children can't deal with the idea of something that is 200 miles away, 2,000 miles away, 240,000 miles away, 92 million miles away. Five and six-year-old youngsters can't deal with those kinds of matters so we don't deal with locations removed from the immediate when working with young children. No, we deal with the immediate — something that is right here. That's why we start with home and family, the neighborhood. They are right here. As youngsters become older and as they are able to comprehend the idea of space, we start talking about locations that are miles away. Also, five-year-olds and six-year-olds can't think in terms of last month, last year, 100 years ago, 200 years ago when America received its independence, 2,000 years ago. Young children simply cannot handle the idea of time, so consequently in social studies when working with young children we deal with matters that are occurring presently. As children become older they can begin to handle matters which are strange temporally.

I believe very strongly that we have got to strike from our vocabulary the contention that some curriculums are too hard for youngsters. Stop and think about it. How would you make something that is hard easy? Sure, you leave out the hard stuff, don't you? It would be simple to make a reading curriculum easy. Leave out the phonics, leave out the vowels. There are many teachers who say I am going to have to skip this, it is too hard. Don't buy this curriculum or that curriculum because it is too hard. Analyze that contention. Sure, there are a lot of things that are hard that could be left out or put off. Roman numerals is an example. Even the Romans had trouble with Roman numerals. We are not going to be any worse off if we leave out Roman numerals, believe me. But there are other things that are very, very hard that are important. They are critical and they are critical early. They can't be left out. They can't be put off. For example, if phonics is a means to an end, if you defer the means, you defer the end, don't you? If you want to put off phonics till a youngster is 7, 8, 9, 10 years old you are putting off until a youngster is 7, 8, 9, 10 years old the time that a youngster can begin to read for himself. You are deferring his independence, and, as you know, if you want youngsters to be able to read to learn, they first have to learn to read. So we reject the idea that as far as learning to read is concerned, we need to take into account *difficulty* as a factor. It is a moot point. It is an issue that is academic. If it is important even though it is hard, and if it is important early, you have to face up to it.

Without question, the hardest thing an individual has to learn in order to read is to understand what is meant by the beginning sound of the word. That is one of the first things a person will have to learn if he or she is ever going to learn to read. You see, to a five year old, "baby" is a sound. A four year old or five year old doesn't know that baby has four phonemes, one of which is the initial sound, one of which is the final sound, and that there are a couple of medial sounds. It is easy to teach youngsters what is meant by the beginning letter of a word because you can see that. But you can't see the beginning sound of a word. It is highly abstract, and yet youngsters cannot learn their letter-sound associations, they cannot learn their phonics, unless they understand what is meant by the beginning sound of the

word for the simple reason that all of the instructional talk we use as teachers in putting together sound and form always makes reference to sound in a particular position.

Now the point I am trying to make is that we do not take into account whether the learning is hard or easy when sequencing reading curriculum. In some other curriculum areas, yes; in social studies, yes; but not in reading. I wish that we as leaders — principals, reading directors — would be very, very reluctant to accept the contention of others that something is too hard and consequently should be left out or put off. If it is hard and unimportant, that is another issue. Fractions come close to that — dividing fractions or multiplying fractions. How many times would you, were it not for the fact that you are a teacher, be doing much multiplying of fractions? Certainly third grade children do not have occasion to do much manipulating of fractions, yet that is where fractions are usually taught.

In the order of [illegible]ity. I suggested that that there are three ways of sequencing curriculum. What might the second way be? Yes, the authorship looks at all of what needs to be learned and asks itself the question, "Of all of these things that we want a person to learn, what are the things that will be most useful at each particular age and grade?" Some of our spelling curriculums are sequenced on that basis, aren't they? What determines whether a spelling word is taught in grade 6 or in grade 2? Or perhaps we should first ask the question, "What determines whether a word is taught in spelling at all?" We have approximately 450,000 words in our language, and a typical grade 2 through 6 spelling curriculum presents about 2,100. The typical grade 2-8 spelling program presents about 3,200. That means 448,000 or 447,000 words in our language don't even make it. Our spelling vocabulary is the smallest of our vocabularies, isn't it? As you know, one out of every ten words that we write is one of three words: *I, and, the.* One out of every four words that we write is one of a small group of 10 words. You don't have to learn how to spell a lot of words if you learn how to spell the right words. As far as our writing vocabulary is concerned words do have relative value. Studies show that the 2,000 most important words and their repetitions account for about 95 percent of the words that we will write in a lifetime. The other 5 percent will be made up of words that are peculiar to us because of the job that we hold, where we live, how much our income eventually comes to be, and other such factors. My point is that if you believe that in spelling youngsters should learn how to spell the most useful words, we do have studies that have identified what those words are that people most often use in the writing that they do as youngsters and as adults. Those are the words that make it into the curriculum. What then determines the order? Sure, those same studies are used to determine what the words are that youngsters in grade 2, for example, seem to use in the writing that they need to do both in and out of school. What are the words that youngsters 12 years of age and in 6th grade seem to have the greatest need for using to execute the writing demands placed upon them in and out of school? Is this the way a reading curriculum is sequenced by taking into account the adjudged usefulness of the elements of the curriculum? No!

In a logical order. So that brings us up to the third way and this is the way we believe reading curriculum is sequenced. The authorship looks at all of this that needs to be learned and asks itself the question, "What is it that a youngster needs to know first? What is it that is subordinate to any of that which remains? What is it that when known would ready the youngster for any of those things that might follow? A decision is made. The authorship looks at the total array and says, "Yes, these things right here, they have to be learned first. If a person knows this, he would then have the background to be able to learn some of these other things, so these things right here come first." Some of these are skills. Some constitute knowledge, information, fact. Some represent the rudiments of attitudes. We might call all of this Level I, or A, or pre-reading, or Alpha, or the Green Level. We can call it anything, but what we are saying is that this needs to come first.

Then the authorship looks at that which remains of the total array and asks itself the question, "If a person knows this, then, of that which remains, what should he be able to learn?" Another decision is made. Yes, if this is known, a person should be ready, should have the background, the wherewithal

so as to be able to learn this. Why don't we call this Level II, or B, or PP1, or call it Beta, or call it the Brown Level? It really doesn't make any difference what we call it. Then, if a person knows this level and this level, he should be able to learn this so let's call it Level III, or C, or PP2, or the Purple Level, and so on until every last proposed element of this whole taxonomy has been ordered.

Significance of Curriculum Sequence

We believe that the way curriculum is ordered has fundamental instructional and organizational implications which in the past have been largely ignored, but need to be highly regarded, and, if highly regarded, would give us our greatest hope that we can achieve failure-proof reading programming. It is upon this that we are building. It is about the only thing left that we haven't tried. We believe that if we can begin instructionally and organizationally to take into account the significance of the way curriculum is sequenced, we might be able to bring about almost total literacy.

Instructional Implications

There isn't a person in this room who would expect that a youngster who had been taught to add and had failed to learn to add and then went on to multiplication would learn to multiply. There isn't a person in this room who would expect that a youngster who had been taught to subtract and had failed to learn to subtract and then went on to division would successfully learn to divide. There isn't a person in here, I am sure, who would believe that a youngster who had failed to learn how to add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers could go on to rational numbers, fractions, and become a successful adder, subtracter, multiplier, and divider of fractions because we know that one does precede the other, that there is an order.

I am not saying that there is a universal sequence in reading because there isn't. You can start out in reading with words or you can start with letters. If you start with letters you can begin with vowels or you can begin with consonants. But, what I am saying, what we are saying, is that there is an order, there is integrity embodied into the curriculum to which *you* have committed yourself which typically in the past has been so lightly regarded as to be virtually disregarded. It has been a no-account factor. If it is true that a person does need to know *this* in order to be able to learn *that*, what is it that should determine when that person should advance from this level to that level? Is it when this has been *taught*? Of course not! It is when this has been *learned*. If it is in fact true that a person needs to know this and this in order to be able to learn a third set of elements, what determines when a person is advanced from this level to the next level? When this has been *taught*? Of course not! It is when this has been learned.

Also, we feel very strongly that the only significance of Level 2 is that it comes after 1 and before 3 regardless of whether you are 6, 16, or 66. The teaching of reading is no different because of the age of the client. A 66 year old illiterate man needs to learn the same things as a 6 year old illiterate boy. Sure, what we *like* to read will differ because of age and grade, but the act of reading does not differ and sometimes we err by thinking that in order to read, senior high school students need to be taught something different from what a first grader needs to be taught. That is not true. A 16 year old meets the same kinds of words as a first grade youngster. The process of reading is no different.

Teach for mastery. Every bureaucracy becomes decadent and a sure sign of decadence, of decay, is when we become more concerned with the means than with the ends. In education this is exemplified when we become more concerned about whether we taught something than whether it has been learned. Teaching is easy. It is not difficult to teach. But, to get some youngsters to learn, that's not easy. We need to begin to be concerned not about teaching done but learning accomplished. We feel very strongly that in curriculums that are sequenced logically, youngsters need to be advanced not on the basis of the rate at which they are taught, but, conversely, they need to be advanced on the basis of the rate at which they are able to learn. Learning is an absolute. You don't half-learn something. For instance, you can't half-learn your vowels. You can't compromise. You must teach for mastery.

I would like for you to hear just these few citations from *Mastery Learning: Theory and Practice*, edited by Block and published by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston:

> "Mastery learning strategies are most effective in subjects which are sequentially learned. Such subjects consist of learnings which are cumulative in that the learning of any unit builds upon the learning of all prior units. The success of mastery learning strategies in sequentially learned subjects is easily explained. The learning of any sequential subject depends upon the learning of each of its units. If at each stage in the sequence the student learns the material upon which the next unit builds, then his learning throughout the sequence is likely to be adequate. However, if he fails to learn at one stage and his learning difficulties are not resolved, he will probably fail to learn the unit at the next stage and, consequently, all subsequent units. Mastery approaches, by means of supplementary feedback/corrective procedures, insures the learning of each unit and hence adequate learning of the entire subject."

From page 95 of the same publication we read:

> "The most successful strategies have supplemented group-based, classroom instruction with feedback/correction procedures. If a school subject is presented as a sequence of learning units, then thorough mastery of the earliest units, with the help of feedback/correction devices, will make student learning of later units more effective, efficient, and progressively less dependent on these devices."

In other words, though you may think that the youngsters are moving initially so very, very slow, it will be more than compensated for by how fast they will be able to move later on if they are taught for mastery in the very beginning.

People, we are premising the belief that the way a curriculum is sequenced does not *suggest* the need to teach for mastery, it *demands* it. Listen to what Schubert and Torgerson say about that point on page 5:

> "The authors contend that a primary grade program which insures total mastery of the basic reading skills of word recognition and word analysis will preclude, in a large measure, later reading failures. Mastery of these basic skills provides a sound foundation for the successful mastery of the vast hierachy of new reading skills."

On page 6 we read:

> "Total mastery of the reading skills must be maintained at all levels so that the frustration level of instruction is avoided."

When you teach for mastery, pupils are always at the right spot, aren't they? They are always correctly placed in this taxonomy, aren't they? They are always ready for the next higher level of learning, aren't they? Why? Because they have learned everything up to that particular point in the past. When you teach for mastery, you never have a misplaced youngster. You never have a youngster being taught at his recreatory level or frustration level.

Keep in mind that youngsters need to be advanced through their curriculum on the basis of the rate at which they learn. Don't say that kids can't learn; that this is too hard. Books don't turn those pages themselves. It is the teacher that directs the youngster to go on to the next thing to be taught. My point is that the teachers should not issue that directive unless what was focused upon previously has, in fact, been learned.

On page 13, Schubert and Torgerson continue:

> "Teachers must continue to strive for high levels of vocabulary mastery and word analysis skill. The slow learning child who is introduced to material before these foundational skills are well in hand will experience a hopeless sense of failure."

On page 22:

> "A basic cause of failure in reading stems from promoting a child from one grade into the next when his basic vocabulary is at a level of mastery of 90% or less. Teachers in the primary grades should strive for 100% mastery of word recognition and word attack skills."

On page 23:

> "The golden era for prevention is in the primary grades. In these grades the teacher should adopt a goal of complete mastery of the reading skills taught at each level. This is the key to prevention. Introducing new and more difficult material to a primary grade child before he has mastered the current vocabulary ignores the first step in a program of prevention. This common practice results in a rapid accumulation of difficulties which causes loss of interest, absence of growth, lowered mastery, and ultimate failure."

The implication is obvious. A reading failure is generally made and not born. And how do you make a reading failure? By advancing him/her through a reading curriculum that is sequenced logically on the basis of the rate at which he/she is *taught*.

Let time be the variable. If we are going to adopt a commitment to teaching for mastery, we are going to have to treat time differently. We have got to begin to think in terms of time as a variable in instruction. Teaching for mastery is saying that time must be a variable. You ask yourself the question, "What typically has determined in the past when we terminate instruction?" When is it that we stop teaching the kids something? It's the calendar or the clock, isn't it? You ask a superintendent how his district is organized. What will he say? He will say 6-3-3, 8-4, 4-4-4. He will respond in terms of a finite number of years. We think in terms of 182 day school years. We think in terms of 330 minutes in the school day in grade 1, 360 minutes in the school day in grade 2. We speak in terms of semester courses. We speak in terms of six-week social studies units. We speak in terms of spending this week on the list of spelling words. We speak in terms of spending today teaching youngsters how to use *shall* and *will* correctly in their speaking and writing. We talk about spending as long on the short sound of "e" as there are lessons in the teacher's guide on the short sound of "e". Now these are all examples of time as a constant, and when you are working with pupils, when our client population differs in terms of how much time they require until they finally learn, this is where we have difficulty applying a mastery learning strategy. As you know, there are some of our youngsters who know what it is that we are proposing for teaching before we get there. There are those who do learn as a result of what we teach, but there are also those for whom we terminate instruction before they have finally learned.

When we speak of making time the variable, we are not speaking of merely more time to pass out more practice material. That's not the answer, but we need more time for the good teacher to search for just the right words to bring about understanding. Bruner said something to the effect that anything can be taught to anybody at any age in an intellectually respectable form if we can translate what it is that we want the person to learn into the language that can be understood. That's our basic problem. It is the one of instructional talk: "How do I finally say this so that you will finally get it? What are some other words that I can use? What are some additional words that I can use? How can I put those words together in a different way so that what I want you to learn will become clear and evident?" You see to do this requires considerably more time than most teachers generally have. Teachers and pupils have far too long been defeated by a system that has not allowed what both know is so desperately needed

and this is more time for the good teacher to spend with those youngsters who have not yet gotten it.

We can illustrate it this way. Consider what happens when we have both curriculum as a constant and time as a constant. With curriculum and time as constants, the variable is achievement which is synonymous with learning. When you are working with a client population that differs in terms of how much time it takes to learn, there are too many for whom instruction ends before learning occurs. Here's a youngster who never seems to get it the first time, the second time, the third time. It takes him twice as long to learn half as much. Then you have those who can learn in an average amount of time. And you do have some youngsters who can learn twice as much in half as much time. With time as a constant, you are bound to have some who will learn as a result of the time that you spend, but you are also going to have those who at the end of this fixed amount of time have not yet learned and so those youngsters are then advanced as a group to attempt to learn something else, the successful learning of which is predicated upon what it is that some of them haven't learned. So what mastery learning is saying is that these two roles have to be changed. Achievement has to be a constant and thus time must become the variable because we know our clients differ in how much time they require. I should also hasten to point out, and I alluded to this earlier, that achievement or mastery of learning is an absolute. The tendency of many teachers is to want to bring the definition of learning down to the kid rather than bring the kid up to the absolute. Most of us do have empathy for youngsters who have difficulty learning so the tendency might exist for us not to expect them to learn so much. We might think that because the vowels are hard, we will leave the vowels out. We might think that a good concession to make is to expect a pupil to learn only half the vowels or to learn the vowels only half as well. The criterion is set at 50 percent rather than 100 percent. Believe me, this is *fatal* in a curriculum area that is sequenced logically. If vowels are important in order to read, aren't vowels to someone who has difficulty learning just as important? Doesn't a slow learner need to know as many vowels as the fast learner? Of course, if you expect that both are going to read. Maybe in social studies you can have different standards of expectancy, but in skill subjects where you are teaching somebody how to do something, you cannot. Mastery has to be just that.

For too long, teachers have been conditioned to apply the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number. They say to themselves, "Maxine seems to be on the verge of getting it," or, "My low group seems to be on the verge of getting it, if only I had more time for them. But, goodness, I have 20 other kids or I have 3 other reading groups and to spend any more time with Maxine or with this group is going to unnecessarily hold those others back. So what I am going to say to Maxine or this group is that we are going to have to go on." I tell them to try harder, that they will get it later, but, of course, later never comes. At that moment, a failure is being born. That is an example of how a teacher is defeated and a kid is defeated by a system that did not allow what both knew was so desperately needed and that was more time to work with an individual or group.

The amount of time that is made available for instruction in our schools is what we believe youngsters of average aptitude will require. How come we spend two hours a day teaching reading in grades 1-2-3 and an hour a day in grades 4-5-6? How did those time allocations evolve? The answer is that we found that youngsters of average aptitude could learn to read if they had about that much time which is more time than the youngsters of above average aptitude would require, and it is not nearly enough time for those with below-average aptitude. One of the greatest problems we face is the fact that people do not understand what grade level means. They do not understand grade level is a mid-point; it is not a base line. Grade level is where we expect youngsters of average aptitude to be at the end of a fixed amount of time. It is impossible to get every kid up to grade level unless for those who are below-average in aptitude we find a lot of additional instructional time. You should fully expect that at the end of the first grade, one-third to one-fourth of your first graders will not have mastered the first grade reading curriculum if they have been taught for mastery. We are presently giving the amount of time that we believe will be totally consumed for youngsters of average aptitude in order to achieve the objective.

Humanize education. We hear a great deal about the need to humanize education, and I believe the idea of mastery learning is the most humanizing notion to hit education in our professional lifetime. I believe there are more affective consequences of mastery than we could ever imagine. When you have no more failure, how can you help but feel good about yourself. Listen to what Bloom is saying:

> "For the past century, we have assumed that mastery of a subject is possible for only a minority of students. Thus we have adjusted our grading system to allow only a small percentage of students (no matter how carefully selected) to receive the grade of A. Even if a group of students learns to a higher level than a previous group, we still persist in awarding A's or mastery recognition to only the top 7 or 10 percent. Mastery and recognition of mastery is unattainable to the majority of students under the present relative grading system — but only because of the way we have rigged the educational system.
>
> "Mastery must be an objective recognition by the student of his own competence and a public recognition by the school or society. Regardless of how much the pupil has learned, if he is denied public recognition in the form of appropriate certification by his teacher or school, he must come to believe that he is inadequate. Subjectively, the student must come to feel that he has control over what it is that has been taught. He must come to realize that he knows and can do what the subject requires.
>
> "If the evaluation system (both formative and summative) and the grading system inform the student of his mastery of a subject, he will come to believe in his own competence. When he has mastered a subject and received both subjective and objective evidence of his mastery, there are profound changes in his view of himself and the outer world. Perhaps the clearest evidence of change is that he develops interest in the subject mastered. He begins to like it and desire more of it. To do well in a subject opens it up for further exploration; to do poorly closes it. The student desires some control over his environment and mastery of a subject gives him some control over at least part of his environment. Interest in a subject then is both a cause and a result of its mastery. Because I mastered it, I like it and I like it because I have mastered it. Motivation for further learning is an important result of mastery."

Mastery learning can be one of the most powerful sources of mental health. Glasser says that there are two conditions that the human psyche simply cannot tolerate and those are loneliness and failure. The human being can accept just about anything else but not failure and loneliness. There are a lot of people who elect to be alone, but they don't elect to be lonely. And no one wants to fail. I am convinced that painful and frustrating school learning experiences exacerbate many of the neurotic symptoms exhibited by high school and college students. How would you like to come to school for ten or eleven years, day after day, fully expecting not to learn because you have never learned in the past? Frequent failure and indications of learning inadequacy must occasion increased self-doubt in students and force them to search for reassurance and adequacy outside of school. It just makes an awful lot of sense to me.

Organizational Implications

We are saying also that the way a curriculum is sequenced has fundamental organizational implications. Not only does it have instructional implications, but the way that this is put together has organizational implications.

I want you to hear what Arthur Heilman says regarding this matter on page 15 of *Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading:*

> "Our schools are set up on a grade-level basis on which the curricula of the various grades are progressive. This is inherent in the grade-level system. This arrangement is obviously logical, but the logic implies that children in the second grade have mastered what was taught in the

first grade because the second grade curriculum is based on the assumption of mastery of the first grade curriculum. In similar manner, the third grade curriculum is based on what was presumably mastered in the second grade.

"As school systems adopted the practice of social promotion one might expect that the grade-level concept would have been abandoned or drastically revised. In the majority of our schools neither of these things happened. The result is that today we find children moving from grade to grade mainly because they have been physically present in a particular grade for an academic year. True, many children master what is required for the next year's curriculum, but many do not and when many do not, the grade-level concept is unsound because it was never designed to function under these conditions. The higher the grade level under consideration, the more apparent becomes the inadequacy of our efforts to impose automatic promotion on a graded system. When we attempt to justify automatic promotion on the grounds that it is psychologically sound because promotion prevents failure, we are being unrealistic in our concept of failure. Children who progress through the grades without adequate skills to deal with the tasks expected of them experience failure every day they attend school."

In addition to suggesting that what we really need to consider is the application of a mastery learning strategy and the employment of continuous progress organization, there is another point that I want to make in passing. There are probably some of you who will say that regardless of what I do, I have a sizeable group of pupils who aren't going to get it. They can't get it. There are some who say that 85 percent literacy isn't too bad -- that that's only 15 percent who can't read. That's not such a bad track record. So what if the United States, France, and Belgium have the biggest illiteracy rates of all the world's developed nations. So what if the illiteracy level in this country has remained fairly constant for the last 30 years though there are some now who say that the illiteracy level has dropped in the last 10 years. That would really show that there is a positive relationship between money and literacy, wouldn't it? Look at the money that we have spent primarily on reading through Title I since 1965.

There are a few things I want to say regarding this contention that a sizeable number of youngsters can't learn. People, we must reject that idea. But you have got to support your rejection of that notion to your staff because there are some who are going to say that this pupil or that one has gone as far as he or she can go. People, the greatest enemy of the child is the phrase: "to the limit of his ability." Think about it. It gives us cause to quit on a kid, doesn't it? It was reassuring when I began teaching because when a kid didn't learn it was his fault. It wasn't mine. And that is what I was taught. You see when I went to school, I was told that when you give a mental test to an individual that yields a mental age, you compare that with a chronological age to get something called an IQ; and that IQ tells you whether or not a person can learn or it tells you how much a person can learn. Billy has an 80 IQ. He belongs in special education. It's a matter of custodianship with Billy. Keep him busy; keep him occupied. Mary's got a 95 IQ. If you can get her through the third reader by the end of 6th grade that is the most you have any right to expect Mary to achieve. There is no use wasting any more instruction on Mary because she has only a 95 IQ, you know.

But now Bloom, Hastings, Carroll, Airasian and some others are telling us that isn't what aptitude means at all. Aptitude doesn't mean whether or not, or at best, how much a person can learn. Bloom and these people are saying that aptitude is an indicator, not of whether or not or how much, but how long, and that if given enough time, everyone can master. Now to me that is the most exciting thought in the world because as a teacher it tells me that if I am good enough, if I am really good enough as a teacher, every one of my charges will achieve and it allows me to look at every youngster with the thought in mind that he can learn, he will learn, he must learn, and I am not going to quit on him till he does learn because the fact that he hasn't learned yet is not his fault. It is mine. We must believe that good teaching can overcome every adversity. If given enough time, he can learn everything that anyone else can learn.

On this point we read on page 50 in *Mastery Learning: Theory and Practice:*

> "The simplest notion of causality is that students with high aptitude levels for a subject can learn its complex ideas while students with low aptitude levels can learn only its simplest.
>
> "In contrast is Carroll's view that aptitude is the amount of time required by the learner to attain mastery of a learning task. Implicit in this view is the assumption that given enough time, all students can conceivably attain mastery of any learning task. If Carroll is correct, then learning mastery is theoretically available to all if only we can develop the organization which will make this possible."

The contention that a failure-proof reading program is within our grasp is based on three premises. One, the way a curriculum is sequenced has instructional implications. We have got to teach for mastery or make time the variable. Two, the way a curriculum is sequenced has organizational implications. We have to build continuous progress organization. Three, given enough time all but one percent of our population can learn. Isn't it exciting? Just think, we can take those three beliefs and build a reading program around them. We can build an educational system around those three ideas if we will pull together in the same direction.

Determine the curriculum. We have been talking in terms of building a failure-proof program. To me, the word "program" is the critical word because program denotes something that has a beginning and an end. It is something that is complete. It is a totality. It is a *Gestalt*. We say one element in program is curriculum. How do you know when a person has learned if you don't know what it is that you want him to learn? So we have to know what our curriculum is. This is the foundation upon which any system, any program, is built. You can get curriculum in two different ways. You can write it or you can buy it. The Archdiocese in Mobile has written its own curriculum. The city of Shreveport has written its own curriculum, but most school districts buy their curriculum. They don't write it. They believe that most teachers are not curriculum writers.

This curriculum can come to you in two different forms. Not only can it come to you from two different sources, write it or buy it, but it can come to you in two different forms. It can come to you free standing, that is, with no instructional materials. Wisconsin Design is a free standing curriculum, isn't it? You don't get any instructional materials with Wisconsin Design — lessons that teach, materials that provide practice. And there are other free standing curriculums. Addison Wesley has one that Grace Ransom put together. Fountain Valley has one. Random House has one. Phi Delta Kappan has one called SARI which is the acronym for Systematic Approach to Reading Instruction. Or, you can buy this curriculum in the form of a basal reading series. That is the other form that the curriculum can take. Eighty-five percent of the reading instruction in the 17,000 school districts in this country is carried on through the use of curriculum embodied in a basal reading series. Like it or not, rightly or wrongly, that is the case. The other 15 percent is carried out through the use of locally written curriculums or free standing curriculums such as Wisconsin Design.

You must start here with curriculum. Trying to improve your reading effort doesn't mean that you necessarily have to change your curriculum, but you may have to go through a process of study in order to reaffirm your continued commitment to what you have been using in the past.

Decide on method. The second element of program is method. We said a moment ago that if you buy a free standing curriculum you don't get any method with it. Method is "how." Most teachers simply cannot teach lessons off the tops of their heads. They may know that they want to teach the short sound of "e" but they don't know exactly what to say. We all have that problem. We don't have the words, we don't know how to put the words together in the right order. We need some lessons that are put into our hands that we can use with the instructional talk provided. That is method. Free standing curriculums such as Wisconsin Design do not have that so what do you do? You take all of the existing

material that you have in your district and you key those materials to that curriculum, don't you. That is one alternative. If the short sound of "e" is one of the elements of the curriculum you look through all of the existing materials for lessons on the short sound of "e." You look through all of your materials for workbook pages, for duplicating masters on the short sound of "e." You key them to this particular element in the taxonomy. When you buy a curriculum embodied into a basal series some of those lessons, some of that practice material comes along with the curriculum. That is why a basal reading series is more expensive.

Provide a management system. We are now to that point where typically a school district ends its effort to upgrade the quality of reading instruction. But, if you end here, believe me, five years from now you will be repeating the process and you will be damning what it was that you did five years ago and the blame will be placed on the curriculum. Well, again, no curriculum ever taught anybody to read because it can't talk. It's just a list.

The hope that we see, and this is where we believe the answer lies, is in educational engineering, in the management of education, the management of instruction. This is what we are banking everything on. This is the one thing that we haven't tried. We believe that we have to make it possible for the managers of instruction to know what is going on. We have to engineer our programs so that we know what is going on.

A management system is designed to do three things: assure mastery of the skills taught, monitor the sequentive development of skills and provide records for continuous progress.

1. *Assure mastery.* A management system is designed to make it possible for you, the teacher, the parents of the kid, the supervisor, the monitor, to know for sure that every kid has learned. That is one function of a management system. Isn't it tragic that in the past so many youngsters' difficulties have gone undetected or, if they were detected, nothing was done about it? Well, the reason they went undetected, the reason that so many kids were allowed to fall through the cracks, were allowed to fail, is that we didn't have any tool which would allow us to know for certain that all of the children of all of the people were learning. That is why every good management system has criterion referenced tests of both a formative and summative nature. The criterion referenced test is designed to provide us with this kind of information, to allow us to know that the youngster is learning everything that is being taught.

2. *Monitor the sequential development of skills.* The second function of a management system, of course, is to ensure that nothing has been left out. We have to face the teacher who really doesn't like to teach reading very much and who certainly doesn't like teaching anything that has to do with decoding so she says to herself, "I am not going to teach that this year. I am going to leave it out." That's how gaps, that's how omissions occur, and that is fatal if your curriculum is sequenced logically. A management system, because of the record form, allows you as the administrator, the person who looks at the record, to find out whether she or he has left anything out. In the past we haven't really had a way of knowing whether everything was being done or not. We do have confidence the typical teacher is doing the job, but it doesn't take many who are not doing the job to disrupt the whole system. Way back in 1959, Kottmeyer said this:

> "When the skills are distributed in the manner in which they are in the reading curriculum, there must be close coordination in the work of the teachers to be sure that each pupil continues his growth when he has a change of teachers. When primary teachers use different materials, when they have large classes, when they do not group pupils carefully, when the school has no system of measuring skills and passing the information to the next teacher, when there is a weak teacher who fails to develop one part of the skills sequence, the program will be disrupted and remedial work will be necessary."

3. *Provide records for continuous progress.* A management system is designed to do a third thing and that is to make it possible for the next teacher of every pupil to know exactly where that pupil is in this curriculum. Rather than having to look up each pupil's preceding teacher to ask how far he has gone in his sequential development of skills, all one must do is to look at the record card.

Those are the three functions of a management system. We are concerned that we begin to make it possible for us to manage the instruction that goes on so that failure does not go undetected, so that things are not left out, and so that kids are correctly placed at the beginning of each new administrative period. A management system assumes *mastery learning.* If you are not willing to commit yourself to teaching for mastery, then forget it. Don't even talk in terms of management because you can't accomplish it. A management system is predicated upon a commitment to the idea of *continuous progress.* It is predicated upon a commitment to the principle that *all can learn,* and it is predicated upon the principal of *articulation.* A management system assumes that you embrace these four principles.

Keep in mind that this is where most people will quit, will give up, because articulation is the hardest thing in a school system to achieve. I would like to say it this way. In a typical school system we have many administrative sources of reading instruction: classroom teacher, SLBP, remedial reading, and Title I. There may also be summer school reading instruction. What so often happens when a youngster is changed from one source of reading instruction to another or when a youngster receives instruction from two or more sources at the same time, which frequently happens, is that a new curriculum is introduced or a second curriculum is added. If only people would begin to be sensitive to how different some of these curricula are. Here you have reading curricula written by people who believe you best teach somebody how to decode by attempting to capitalize upon the systematic nature of the sound system. But suppose that youngster also was taught from another source whose authors believe that you should not teach decoding that way. This is an example of totally disregarding the philosophical rationale of the different series and the integrity of those curriculums. What we find invariably is that the pupil is started over at the very beginning of the new curriculum. There is no articulation.

Articulation is synonymous with coordination. Coordination is one of those warm, soft, fuzzy words. You are supposed to be coordinated. Well, you might recall from your administration courses that in order to coordinate something you have to find a coordinating factor, don't you? It's like adding uncommon fractions. What is the first thing we do? We find the common denominator. If you expect to coordinate the various sources of reading instruction for your school district, you have to find the common denominator, too. And what's the only possible common denominator? Curriculum. A school district must decide on a common reading curriculum to be used throughout all administrative units of the school system.

What have we left out? There are only three elements in the organization of reading programs: curriculum, methodology and management. People, we have looked for the answer in the area of the *curriculum,* haven't we? We have thought that if we could find the right curriculum or match the right curriculum to the right kid, our problem would be solved. If only we could spend enough, buy enough, that would make the difference. Then we thought, if only we could find the right *methodology* to match with the dominant learning modality of the pupil, that would be the answer. Don't you think it's about time that we consider looking somewhere else?

Problems and Suggested Action Alternatives in Establishing the Administrator's Role in Right to Read: A Report of the Section Meetings

During the conference, two sets of section meetings were scheduled to allow administrators the time to address topics related to the objectives for conference participants. The topics of the section meetings were:

1. Establishing the Administrator's Role in Right to Read: What Are the Problems?
2. Establishing the Administrator's Role in Right to Read: Action Alternatives

Since there were six sections in each set of meetings, direct reports from each meeting would provide six lists of problems and six lists of action alternatives. It seemed that the information might be more useful if the lists were collapsed into a single list of problems paired with suggested solutions and the redundancy removed. This was done.

Most groups organized their discussion around the objectives for participants, taking each one in order. The objectives dealt with the development of criteria for: a). establishing the administrator's role in Right to Read, b) developing administrative commitment to the local Right to Read effort, c) developing a working relationship between the local Right to Read director and his/her central office administrator or principal and d) establishing and gaining administrative acceptance and support for the role of the local Right to Read director. Also, each group addressed what they saw as additional problems that begged for answers before Right to Read could get off the ground. These are grouped under the topics: f) organizing the Right to Read program, and g) operationalizing the Rignt to Read program.

Therefore, the following sets of problems and participant-suggested action alternatives are organized into six sections according to the topic under discussion rather than by group of persons participating in the discussion.

A. Establishing the Administrator's Role in R_2R

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
1. How can administrators become sufficiently informed about R_2R to realize they must play an active role?	1.1 Conduct an awareness session for administrators on "What is R_2R?"
	1.2 Devote a session to the "people" aspect of R_2R
2. What is the central office administrator's role?	2.1 Indicate to all that R_2R is a priority.
	2.2 Focus attention on what is to come.
	2.3 Show where R_2R fits into the system.
	2.4 Establish clear roles and lines of authority.
	2.5 Make a public announcement about the program.
3. How can the roles of principal and central office administrators be delineated.	3.1 Sit down with the R_2R director and discuss what roles need to be played.
	3.2 Write job descriptions in relation to R_2R.
	3.3 Have all involved bring in their own job descriptions and discuss the need for role changes.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
	3.4 Develop an organizational chart.
	3.5 Determine if present roles must be changed for situation to be workable.
	3.6 Check federal guidelines for clues to job descriptions.
	3.7 The contract with a local district might suggest a job description.
4. How can the administrator's role in R_2R be coordinated with other roles that must be played?	4.1 Have administrators and LEA directors take the training program together.
	4.2 Work out role definitions and relate them to the organizational chart.
5. How can the administrative role in R_2R be made a high priority?	5.1 Explain how process will benefit the whole school system in all areas.
	5.2 Clarify the nature of the process to get full understanding that it is an effort to improve the developmental reading program and institute a continuous progress program with mastery learning.
	5.3 Show that it will benefit all children.
6. How are the roles of the Title I director and R_2R director delineated and clarified?	6.1 All personnel involved should sit down with superintendent and work out roles.
	6.2 The R_2R director provides leadership in working through the R_2R process.
	6.3 Brainstorm roles that would be helpful and complement each other.
7. Can administrators play too active a role, usurping the role of the local R_2R director?	7.1 There is much work to be done.
	7.2 Roles need to be defined so each person knows the boundaries of his responsibilities.
8. What is the role of superintendent or central office administration?	8.1 Delegate necessary authority to accomplish the R_2R goals.
	8.2 Be the person who frees the R_2R director for discussions with principals and teachers when necessary and provides the time to assess and evaluate programs, approaches and/or directions.
	8.3 Provide some additional financial support beyond usual allocation, if possible.
	8.4 Provide clerical help.
	8.5 Assist in setting up evaluation procedures.
9. What is the role of the R_2R director?	9.1 Maintain a concrete knowledge of reading programs and reading skills.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
	9.2 Assist building principals in acquiring a better knowledge of reading and reading skills, particularly at the secondary level.
	9.3 Organize the district Task Force.
	9.4 Implement a needs assessment of the district reading program.
	9.5 Conduct Task Force planning sessions to develop a plan of action based on priority needs.
	9.6 Insure the inclusion of developmental inservice courses in reading.
10. What is the role of the principal?	10.1 Be an active catalyst in the process of strengthening the integration of reading in the total curriculum.
	10.2 Be an enthusiastic and visible supporter of the R_2R program to enable program goals to be accomplished.
	10.3 Coordinate the R_2R program commitment with other program commitments.
	10.4 Meet with the superintendent on a continuing basis to schedule R_2R activities on the Master Calendar for the year.

B. Develop Administrative Commitment to Local R_2R Effort

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
1. How is the credibility of R_2R established as a basis for getting administrative commitment?	1.1 Develop awareness of what R_2R is in terms everyone can understand.
	1.2 Explain R_2R concepts.
	1.3 Provide time for principals and central office staff to become aware of the R_2R goals and process.
	1.4 Show that R_2R need not be a tremendous financial burden. A reordering of priorities may simply require re-allocations in the budget.
2. How can administrators resolve the issues that restrain their making a commitment; i.e., time, cost, union contracts, balancing resources among all staff, apathy, lip service, resistance to change, personality clashes, presence of fence sitters and cynics, etc.	2.1 Have an information and clarification session.
	2.2 Provide follow-up on topics discussed.
	2.3 Have small regional conferences to build commitment through improved opportunities for sharing solutions.
	2.4 Keep lines of communication open.
	2.5 Depend on the R_2R process to build on what is good in the system.
	2.6 Avoid negative reactions to blocks/constraints.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
3. How is the commitment of every principal gained?	3.1 Recognize each one's talents. 3.2 Express a need for the kinds of assistance they can give. 3.3 Support the kinds of contributions they feel comfortable making. 3.4 Emphasize that they play a key role.
4. How can a continuing commitment to the process be maintained?	4.1 Determine if the system is ready for R_2R before starting. 4.2 Get administrators behind it at the beginning. 4.3 Increase communications to everyone K - 12. 4.4 Determine prerequisites for success and attend to them. 4.5 Translate resolution by school committee into action. 4.6 Seek the cooperation of the press in getting public awareness of the resolution. 4.7 Get the backing of individual school principals. 4.8 Put some principals on the Task Force. 4.9 Build the R_2R effort onto any previous commitment there was to reading. 4.10 Attempt to arouse interest at the secondary level in scheduling reading into the curriculum. 4.11 Put into financial terms the cost of getting a reading disabled ninth grader, for example, to read at the desired level. 4.12 Emphasize that even though the process is federally defined, all specific decisions are determined locally so that the program has strong local characteristics.
5. How are negative attitudes among administrators changed?	5.1 Explain the R_2R process and how it will affect them. 5.2 Connect relevant aspects of R_2R with their areas of expertise and show how they can contribute. 5.3 Approach a discussion of R_2R with a flexible notion of how it can operate. 5.4 Involve them in some aspect of the process. 5.5 Suggest the use of professional visiting days for learning more about R_2R. 5.6 Encourage enthusiasm among their peer group — "Make it a Right to Read school system."

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
	5.7 Show that the problem with commitment is traditional. The student's right to read has always been there. Society's concern for literacy has always been there. Right to Read is now focusing on the process to find solutions to old problems.
	5.8 Involve their peers and let them spread enthusiasm.

C. Develop a Working Relationship between R_2R Directors and Principals

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
1. How are lines of communications formed?	1.1 Conduct introductory general information meetings.
	1.2 Conduct small group meetings to clarify points raised by specific individuals or groups.
	1.3 Share information on what is happening through memos, etc.
	1.4 Keep the local teachers association on the memo list.
	1.5 Involve everyone in the planning in some way — representation, etc.
	1.6 Involve local media in telling the R_2R story.
	1.7 Avoid overloading the Task Force with reading teachers. Members should be a cross section of the school system who can report to their referent groups.
2. How are attitudinal changes made?	2.1 Press issues to bring out negative feelings and conflicts so they can be dealt with.
	2.2 Involve superintendent in general awareness sessions to show his commitment and support.
3. How are administrators moved from lip service into action?	3.1 Show that reading integrates into all areas of the curriculum. It's the one emphasis that will have a positive effect on all curricular areas and programs.
	3.2 Show appreciation for the help they give.
	3.3 Have an effective outsider present positive views, moderate a discussion, etc.
4. How are personality clashes resolved?	4.1 Take the initiative and express feelings.
	4.2 Openly recognize the other's talents.
	4.3 Use another person harmonious to both personalities as a go-between.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
	4.4 Let the other person know you need his/her ideas.
	4.5 Have policy set at a higher level.
	4.6 Use outside experts — Technical Assistants, for example — to deal with difficult issues.
	4.7 Reserve coercive efforts as a last resort.

D. Establishing and Gaining Administrative Acceptance and Support for the Role of the Local R_2R Director

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
1. How can the R_2R director's role be presented so that it will be accepted?	1.1 Have the superintendent/central office person responsible for role definitions sit down with him/her and decide upon the role of the R_2R director.
	1.2 Have the superintendent articulate the R_2R director's role to other administrators and central office personnel.
	1.3 Have the building administrator with the R_2R director articulate the role of the R_2R director to the staff of his building.
	1.4 Make sure each principal knows he is the key person in the effort in his building.
2. What can administrators do to support the R_2R director's role?	2.1 Make clear the administration and school board commitment to R_2R.
	2.2 Establish the need for the R_2R director.
	2.3 Show the benefits and payoffs in joining the effort.
	2.4 Raise faculty consciousness of the importance of reading.
	2.5 Present R_2R as a possible solution to many of the school's problems.
3. What can be done about a situation where there are too many bosses for the R_2R director to be accountable to?	3.1 Encourage the establishment of clear lines of authority.
	3.2 Find out where the superintendent's secretary stands in the chain of command.
	3.3 Plan a reasonable schedule of meetings between the superintendent or assistant superintendent and the R_2R director to clear the process steps and move the effort forward.
	3.4 Establish good working relationships between R_2R director and all administrators.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
4. How can the R_2R director help administrators to understand where R_2R fits into their system as it exists?	4.1 Explain the goals and process. 4.2 Submit a written report of the orientation session held at U.R.I. 4.3 When the needs assessment is completed, explain the results. 4.4 When priorities are determined, indicate areas where support and material and human resources are needed. 4.5 Present R_2R as a coordinating effort that brings all programs into focus as part of a larger overall plan.

E. Organizing the Right to Read Program

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
1. What is R_2R?	1.1 At the local level it is a process, not a program. 1.2 R_2R is a unifying effort. 1.3 R_2R extends through all discipline areas.
2. How do you get people involved in R_2R?	2.1 The superintendent and school board appoint a R_2R director. 2.2 The Task Force represents all levels of the school and areas of the curriculum. 2.3 There should be principals, central office staff, other program directors, teachers and parents represented on the Task Force. 2.4 The Advisory Council represents all areas and interests in the community. Some school representatives should be involved.
3. Who selects the Task Force?	3.1 The superintendent selects the Task Force after receiving recommendations and sometimes volunteer offerings.
4. Who selects the Advisory Council?	4.1 The school committee appoints the Advisory Council after receiving suggestions and recommendations.
5. How can the R_2R effort be planned to include both inter- and intraschool participation?	5.1 Disseminate information widely and establish awareness levels throughout the system. 5.2 Select Task Force members to represent a cross section of the system. 5.3 Encourage principals to play a key role in implementing the plan within their schools. 5.4 Draw upon the experiences of Phase I and Phase II people during planning and implementation.

F. Operationalizing the Right to Read Program

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
1. How does R_2R get off the ground?	1.1 Meetings are held to acquaint everyone with the R_2R goals and process.
	1.2 School board and administrator commitment should be evident.
	1.3 Materials may be distributed that describe what R_2R is.
2. How is public support enlisted?	2.1 Make public the school committee resolution.
	2.2 Involve students in making posters and other materials to advertise R_2R.
	2.3 Show the R_2R film at a public meeting.
	2.4 Talk to students and get their feedback.
	2.5 Photograph school reading activities and publicize with newspaper article.
	2.6 Keep public informed.
	2.7 Make community aware of the importance of their role in the effort.
	2.8 Provide R_2R placemats for use in local restaurants.
	2.9 Put up R_2R posters and banners in public places.
	2.10 Seek public library cooperation and support.
	2.11 Attempt to get on radio and TV talk shows.
	2.12 Assess and clarify community feelings.
	2.13 Remain sensitive to community needs.
	2.14 Provide the telephone number of a volunteer who will answer questions on R_2R.
	2.15 Introduce programs such as Reading is Fundamental (RIF), Junior Great Books, Community Volunteers, etc.
3. How can R_2R be implemented when the teachers association sets the priorities for the school?	3.1 Spend time developing awareness and commitment.
	3.2 Keep communications channels open.
	3.3 Move slowly seeking input from the association and all representatives on the Task Force.
	3.4 Maintain the commitment of the school board and administration.
	3.5 Avoid being just philosophical — take action steps that have support.
	3.6 Advocate within-school-building involvement.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
	3.7 Show that R_2R does not produce winners and losers; it's for everybody.
	3.8 Seek the cooperation of the administration in providing advantages for involvement.
4. How do you encourage teachers to develop a commitment to the R_2R plan?	4.1 Help them with small problems to show that R_2R can make a difference in the classroom.
	4.2 Make R_2R flexible enough to survive. Avoid a set routine that some may object to.
	4.3 Show that R_2R is not something extra but a chance to change priorities based on needs.
	4.4 Help them to see that they can do something to improve students' reading ability without being specialists.
5. If the reading program is changed, what is done with existing materials?	5.1 Look at the existing materials and incorporate them into the solutions.
	5.2 Conduct inservice on how to integrate the language arts.
	5.3 Provide assistance in using multiple approaches and materials.
6. How do you motivate teachers to accept inservice training?	6.1 Get substitutes and do it during the day on released time.
	6.2 Arrange for inservice credit.
	6.3 Insert notes of recognition in personnel file.
	6.4 Conduct some during the summer.
	6.5 Keep the local teachers association informed.
	6.6 Get assurance of staff support.
	6.7 Use some professional days to visit active R_2R schools.
	6.8 Involve department chairpersons.
	6.9 Base inservice efforts on priority needs discovered through needs assessment.
	6.10 Involve the teachers who will be affected in the planning.
	6.11 Use existing talent on the staff rather than bringing in outsiders.
	6.12 Establish awareness of the plan of action and its relation to goals.
7. How can content area teachers be motivated to teach the skills necessary for reading the assigned materials?	7.1 Acquaint content area teachers with the types of skills to be taught by content area teachers.

Problems	Suggested Action Alternatives
	7.2 Conduct general meetings for teachers at all levels to discuss the problems in reading content materials.
	7.3 Encourage administrators to adopt a point of view that supports the involvement of content area teachers.
	7.4 Start teachers talking about whether and how reading is important in their subject or skill areas.
	7.5 Create a general awareness of the materials and resources available to assist them in teaching content reading skills.
	7.6 Realize that content teachers are aware of the problems. Ask them where they want to go in relation to them.
	7.7 Establish a K-12 emphasis on reading instruction so secondary teachers are a part of it.
	7.8 Make available copies of books such as Kohl's *Reading: How To.*
	7.9 Someone should publish guidelines for inservice programs for secondary content teachers.
	7.10 Make it clear that content area teachers are not expected to teach all the basic reading skills — only the skills needed to read the materials they assign.
8. How can secondary school reading programs be improved?	8.1 Extend the continuous progress plan from elementary into secondary.
	8.2 Put pressure on publishers to produce the kinds of materials needed to meet student needs.
	8.3 Hire a person to coordinate the program who understands reading from the elementary level up.
	8.4 Plan a program based on what you want students to be able to do when they get through.
	8.5 Run some pilot projects that teachers can watch.
9. What happens when funding is over?	9.1 R_2R is a process whereby LEAs build their own programs to meet R_2R goals. When funding is over, local personnel will be familiar with the process so that they can continue to rebuild their program until their goals are met.
	9.2 R_2R is a "people" program. Its effectiveness depends upon people working together toward common goals. The aftermath should be positive.

RIGHT TO READ AND THE TASK AHEAD

—Barbara Moody

Right to Read is not a program, but a process. It is a process through which the strengths of an existing program can be maintained while new practices or programs are developed to overcome existing weaknesses. The process includes several activities common to all sites, but the specifics of these activities may vary according to local characteristics.

The first activity is that of selecting working groups to assist in carrying through the process. A Task Force is formed representative of all instructional levels and subject areas. An Advisory Council (sometimes called the community task force) is also formed — whether at this early stage or at a somewhat later point in the process will depend upon local determination.

The Task Force begins work with the Criteria of Excellence developed by the New England Consortium and set forth in the small blue booklet titled *Focus on Excellence*. These criteria identify the conditions necessary for a quality, or "failure proof," reading program. The Task Force uses this set of criteria as an outline for building a needs assessment instrument or questionnaire through which they can determine how nearly the local school system meets these conditions. This instrument is given to all staff members, administrators, and others deemed appropriate in the local area, (or a representative sample of this group in large school systems) for their response.

The responses to the needs assessment instrument reveal the respondents' impressions of how closely the district-wide reading program meets the Criteria of Excellence. They are tabulated to identify perceived strengths and weaknesses in the existing program. The Task Force must then determine whether the identified weaknesses are valid in terms of local expectations. Then the group establishes some priorities and decides which criteria should be attended to in the next year, or two years, or three. Setting both short-range and long-range goals gives a sense of direction to the process.

These determinations of validity and priority of needs become the basis of a local *Plan of Action* which specifically states the objectives for meeting the selected criteria, what will be done, by whom, and when it will be completed.

This is a long term process. While it is going on, the LEA Director will receive training at both the state and Consortium levels. This training is designed to assist the LEA Director to acquire the skills and information necessary for guiding the local system through the process.

As you talk with those of us who have been working through this process, you will probably sense the excitement and, yes, joy that seems to come with Right to Read. As you work through the process yourselves, I hope that you will experience this joy and excitement which, for me, is Right to Read.

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What is Literacy?

Literacy is the possession of reading skills and competencies essential for an effective and productive life, in terms of the Right to Read effort.

Literacy is not the same for all people. To a certain extent, everyone must be sufficiently literate to cope with the essentials of everyday living and be a contributing member of society. Beyond this, a person's need for competence is largely defined by his or her life goals. No one who is motivated to seek higher goals in life and who is otherwise capable of doing so should be held back due to lack of literacy skills. In the Right to Read effort, then, literacy is not meant to be defined as a minimal level of competence, but rather, as a level necessary to fulfill one's individual purpose in life and to contribute to the good of society.

The summary of the Adult Performance Level Project conducted at the University of Texas at Austin by Dr. Norvell Northcutt lists five goal areas associated with adult functional competence that might help to make a definition of literacy more specific. They are: a) *Occupational Knowledge:* to develop a level of occupational knowledge which will enable adults to secure employment in accordance with their individual needs and interests, b) *Consumer Economics:* to manage a family economy and to demonstrate an awareness of sound purchasing principles, c) *Health:* to insure good mental and physical health for the individual and his family, d) *Government and Law:* to promote an understanding of society through government and law and to be aware of governmental functions, agencies and regulations which define individual rights and obligations and e) *Community Resources:* to understand that community resources, including transportation systems, are utilized by individuals in society in order to obtain a satisfactory mode of living. The reading skills necessary to function effectively in these areas should be acquired by all persons. In addition, many individuals have a personal need for literacy skills of a self-fulfilling nature to achieve their highest purpose in life.